

**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS
CONTINUUM OF CARE REGIONAL COMMITTEE ON HOMELESSNESS
MEETING MINUTES
JANUARY 28, 2008**

MEMBERS ATTENDING:

Greg Stanton, Councilmember of Phoenix, Chair
Roberto Armijo, Community Information &
Referral Services
Kim Hohman for David Barnhouse, Governor's
Office
*Judy Bowden, Mesa United Way
*Brad Bridwell, US Vets
Kathryn Brown, AZ Dept of Corrections
Kendra Cea, APS
Trinity Donovan, Valley of the Sun United Way
Eric Strunk for Steve Frate, City of Glendale,
Councilmember
*Joyce Gross, Town of Buckeye
Theresa James, City of Tempe
Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix
Don Keuth, Phoenix Community Alliance, Co-
Vice Chair
*Mark Ludwig, AZ Department of Housing
*Dan Lundberg, City of Surprise
*Nick Margiotta, Phoenix Police Department
*Carrie Mascaro, Catholic Charities
David Bridge for Mike McQuaid, HSC
Gina Ramos-Montes, City of Avondale
Darlene Newsom, United Methodist Outreach
Ministries
Connie Stepnitz for Brenda Holland, City of
Goodyear, Councilmember
Brenda Robbins, AZ Dept of Health Services
Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family
*Annette Stein, Maricopa County HS
Jacki Taylor, ACEH
*Margaret Trujillo, MG Trujillo Associates
*Mike Whalen, Councilmember of Mesa
*Mary Rose Wilcox, Maricopa County,
Supervisor
Elizabeth Morales for Ted Williams, Arizona
Behavioral Health Corporation
*Diana Yazzie Devine, Native American
Connections

OTHERS PRESENT

Nancy Barkley, MAG
Sheila Bates, House of Refuge East
Mike Bell, St. Vincent De Paul
Jessica Berg, Lodestar DRC
Tim Cole, City of Phoenix
Gwyneth Cowger, Advocates for the Disabled
Elizabeth Cranmer, Area Agency on Aging
Bahney Dedolph, Catholic Charities
DeDe Gaisthea, MAG
Randy Gearhart, Phoenix Shanti
Dick Geasland, Tumbleweed
Nancy Gerlach, Lodestar DRC
Christy Gibbons, HBYS
Sherry Gray, SBH
Walt Gray, St. Vincent De Paul
Donna Greenspan, Chrysalis
Andy Hall, DES
Gwen Henderson, WINR
Katie Hobbs, Sojourner Center
Jeff Jamison, City of Phoenix
Christopher McGee, Recovery Innovations of
Arizona
Brandee Mead, MAG
Linda Mushkatel, Maricopa County
Joe Razo, Basic Mission
Amy St. Peter, MAG
Michelle Thomas, YWCA

*Those members neither present nor represented by
proxy.

+Those members present by audio or
videoconference.

1. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Stanton called the meeting to order at 2:14 p.m. He welcomed everyone and introductions ensued.

2. Call to the Audience

Walt Gray asked if the Continuum of Care Committee will take a position on the one million lottery funds budget item. Chair Stanton replied the Continuum has not taken a formal position but that the members of the committee could take a stance on the issue.

3. Approval of the November 5, 2007 Meeting Minutes

Chair Stanton asked for a motion to approve the November 5, 2007 meeting minutes. Don Keuth, Phoenix Community Alliance, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Kendra Cea, APS, seconded the motion; the meeting minutes passed unanimously. Chair Stanton asked for a motion to approve the December 6, 2007 joint meeting minutes. Don Keuth, Phoenix Community Alliance, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Kendra Cea, APS, seconded the motion; the meeting minutes passed unanimously.

4. Presentation of the Current Status of Homelessness in Arizona and Efforts to Prevent and Alleviate Homelessness by the AZ Department of Economic Security

Chair Stanton introduced Andy Hall, AZ Department of Economic Security (DES) who presented the “Current Status of Homelessness in Arizona” report. Mr. Hall began by thanking the committee members for their contributions on data received. He also thanked the US Vets, CASS HMIS, Tempe Community & Housing Referral and the other 300 plus providers for their assistance. Mr. Hall stated the report provides recent information on the demographics of homelessness in each Continuum of Care over the past year, provides briefs on local and national research on homelessness housing, and lists state and national research advocacy resources. This report also highlights data from the Arizona Department of Education on the number of children and youth experiencing homelessness in the state.

Mr. Hall added there is a special focus on veterans of military service, unaccompanied youth, and success stories. The report also includes Maricopa Continuum highlights such as Tempe Project Homeless Connect (PHC), Inter-faith Homeless Emergency Lodging Program (I-HELP), Valley of the Sun United Way, U.S. VETS-Phoenix, Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS), and the VA Medical Center’s Health Care for Homeless Veterans Outreach Program. Mr. Hall pointed out there is a new section providing briefs on recent local and national research on homelessness and housing. Mr. Hall stated he looks forward to hearing any suggestions and contributions the committee might have for this report. The report is available on website: az.des/csa/programs/homeless.

5. The Town of Buckeye’s 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

Chair Stanton stated Joyce Gross, Town of Buckeye, was not present and therefore unable to conduct her presentation on the Town of Buckeye’s plan for the development

of a 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness. This item will be moved to a future meeting agenda.

6. Survey Results and Feedback on Recommendations for One Million Lottery Funds

Chair Stanton introduced Mattie Lord, Arizona Department of Economic Security, who informed the Committee on the survey results and recommendations for the one million lottery funds. Ms. Lord began by stating through an online survey, DES collected feedback from stakeholders regarding priorities for the funding and methods of distribution. The survey was developed by the Chairs of the three Continua of Care (CoC) and DES Staff. The survey was disseminated to over 400 people in Maricopa County alone. There were nine recommendations based on the results from the survey. Ms. Lord stated the information gathered from those surveys is presented in the report handed out.

Darlene Newsom, UMOM New Day Center, asked if the report is based on poverty statistics and how does this information compare based on population. Ms. Lord stated Maricopa County is 63 percent of the population in Arizona. David Bridge, Central Arizona Shelter Services (CASS) commented that the current split in DES housing contract on transitional and emergency services, are not equal. Ms. Newsom added that DES funded five additional programs and therefore resulted in cuts in other areas. Chair Stanton noted the breakdown for Maricopa County was 35 percent for transitional housing, 35 percent for emergency shelter and 30 percent for housing placement services. He suggested looking at the current split in the DES contract. Ms. Newsom stated she would like to see what the current split is before recommendations are finalized. Amy Schwabenlender, Valley of the Sun United Way, asked if additional responses from committee members could be emailed to Ms. Lord. Ms. Newsom commented that emergency shelter received a considerable amount more than permanent housing. She indicated that the split would be closer to 30 percent for housing and 70 percent to emergency. Laura Skotnicki, Save the Family, asked how much money was to be paid for housing placement services. Ms. Lord responded there was not an estimate at this time.

Mr. Bridge stated he recalls the original intent of the bill was for agencies to regain their losses from budget cuts. He added that DES funded programs have been cut and he feels adding new services will not help the agencies that were hurt by the budget cuts. Chair Stanton reminded the Committee that the original request was for five million but was reduced to one million and was passed by the legislation. Mr. Bridge added it might be better to tie the funding to existing contracts to avoid going through another RFP process and save administration costs. Ms. Lord stated she would take note of the Committee suggestions for the funds to go into exiting contracts. Ms. Newsom stated at UMOM the demand for emergency housing is very high. She would like to have a provision to use some of those dollars towards housing placement and to provide those support services that are already in the contract.

Jacki Taylor, ACEH stated that the coalition put together a white paper looking at the existing gaps in the community and was in full support of utilizing funding for existing

beds. Don Keuth, Phoenix Community Alliance, added he felt utilizing funds on existing contracts already in place seemed like the best and quickest way to use the funds. Jessica Berg, Lodestar, commented that every agency is in need of funding; housing is a way to plan on meeting the needs and to consider using a small percentage for housing programs such as a housing first program. Bahney Dedolph, Catholic Charities, asked how the additional bed nights will be based and on what kind of formula. She also added small programs that were impacted by budget cuts should also be considered. Ms. Dedolph stated that the money should be put where there is a lack of bed space and into programs to get them back to the level they used to be. Ms. Skotniki added that she too felt the money should be put back into existing programs.

Gwen Henderson, Women in New Recovery, commented there are 3,000 to 5,000 beds not counted in the annual homeless counts because they are termed as halfway houses but people who are homeless make up 60 to 70 percent of their population. Ms. Henderson suggested that it might be an important group to study. Erik Strunk, City of Glendale, stated Glendale finished the CDBG process and the concern the city heard was for emergency shelter services with a transitional component. Mr. Strunk said the City of Glendale would support getting people off the streets and into transitional housing or emergency shelters.

Chair Stanton summarized the Committee's suggestions of using the lottery funds to refurbish programs that have been depleted by budget cuts and to use existing contracts adding funds for housing placement in the existing contracts. Ms. Lord commented the scope may be revised to strengthen the content. Ms. Skotniki suggested that the changes be made in an amendment. Ms. Lord stated she would relay the comments expressed today and discuss them at DES. She clarified the comments from the Committee of suggesting allocating the monies to existing contracts and doing away with the RFP process. Ms. Lord stated she will make the modifications to the recommendations and will present them on February 27, 2008 to the Interagency and Community Council on Homelessness. Mr. Stanton urged the members of the committee to go to legislature to vote on how funding dollars are spent. He also asked members to get involved by advocating for increases in funding.

7. 2008 Homeless Street Count

Chair Stanton introduced Brande Mead, MAG, and Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix, who updated the Committee on plans for the January 29, 2008 Homeless Street Count. Ms. Mead began by thanking everyone for acquiring a significant increase of volunteers and for stepping up to the plate. She stated she has been working with city coordinators on training volunteers and the cities have process in place. Ms. Mead also thanked Erick Strunk, City of Glendale, Theresa James, City of Tempe, and Deanna Jonovich, City of Phoenix, for all their help with the coordination of the 2008 Homeless Street Count.

Ms. Mead stated a press release will go out today highlighting the importance of the street count and any press received will be forwarded. She added once the street count statistics come out, she would report them back to the Committee. Ms. Jonovich stated

the city of Phoenix street count would encompass the entire city broken up into one-mile grids of high and low density areas. Ms. Jonovich stated they would focus on fifty-one high density areas that are completely counted. In addition to the fifty-one high-density areas, the rest of the city will be conducted by a random sampling of the remaining one-hundred low-density areas. Ms. Jonovich commented Phoenix will try to cover as much of the city as possible. Ms. Jonovich acknowledged and thanked Jeff Jamison and Tim Cole from the City of Phoenix, for all the hard work they have done to coordinate this street count. She added the city would utilize the most experienced of their volunteers to count in those identified high-density areas. Chair Stanton reminded the Committee the count could under represent the actual number of homeless individuals. He added it does not necessarily mean that we have a high increase of homeless but the count is more efficient.

Ms. Mead informed the council members that a shelter count by DES would be taking place in addition to the street count. Ms. Stepnitz asked with the increase numbers of volunteers is there an expectation of an increase of homeless people. Ms. Jonovich stated they are counting the high-density areas the same way they did last year and that there was an increase last year because they had more volunteers. Chair Stanton stated this is one of those unanswered questions, is there more homeless or are we just counting better. He added with increased experienced volunteer could be an increase in people or just the accuracy of the count itself.

8. Report on January 7, 2008 Appreciation Luncheon and Appreciative Inquiry Workshop
Chair Stanton introduced Brande Mead, MAG, who provided a report on the January 7, 2008 Appreciation Luncheon and Appreciative Inquiry Workshop. Ms. Mead began by stating the day started off with a workshop in the morning that led to the luncheon and continued with the workshop in the afternoon. She added the facilitator Ms. Trosten-Bloom commented on how well the day went.

Ms. Mead displayed two items that were constructed by the participants at the Appreciative Inquiry workshop, a positive core, and mind map. The positive core map was created as a representation of when the continuum was at its best. The mind map was created as a representation of the future of the continuum of where they want to go and how they are going to get there. The purpose of the Appreciative Inquiry is to focus on the process of continuum and building on its successes. Ms. Mead added at a meeting with stakeholders later they commented it would be a good idea to continue with Appreciative Inquiry. It would be a good tool to work with other groups and clients to replicate the successes.

9. Legislative Update
Chair Stanton introduced, Jacki Taylor, Arizona Coalition to End Homelessness, who provided a legislative update on issues related to homelessness. Ms. Taylor stated the current legislative focus is on the budget and not only looking at budget cuts for 2008 but 2009 and possibly 2010. Programs such as child care, transportation and elder care are looking at funding cuts. General Assistance is advocating for no funding cuts for

these programs. Ms. Taylor stated another key area at risk is the Housing Trust Fund. The House and Senate are proposing a fifty-five million cut, which would affect currently funded projects (FY 2008). Ms. Taylor informed members she has been sending out alerts via email and if there is anyone who is not receiving them and would like to, please contact her directly. Ms. Taylor recently sent out an alert concerning the Farm bill and how funding cuts will have an impact on food stamps and TANF programs at the federal level.

Ms. Taylor commented Chair Stanton met with the Governor and encouraged others to be a consistent presence with their legislatures and to voice their concern. Ms. Taylor stated if you have not signed on to have your voice to be heard on specific issues; individuals need to sign on and use this tool. She added you could weigh in on a pending bill through this process. Ms. Taylor stated she would send out instructions on how to find a list of the legislative sessions.

10. MAG Continuum of Care Regional Committee on Homelessness Evaluation

Chair Stanton led an evaluation discussion of the Continuum and referred members to the survey handed out. Ms. Mead informed members they could leave their feedback forms today or fax them back. She stated the survey asks for feedback on what the committee's strengths are, what to expand on, what they should focus on differently, and what to include on future agenda items. Chair Stanton said one suggestion is for the committee to diversify membership in order to gain a wider audience and to include the business community.

Ms. Skotnicki reiterated the need to diversify by adding more homeless members. Gwen Henderson, WINR, commented that one strength of the committee is the ability to get answers from MAG staff concerning the HUD applications for services providers. Chair Stanton added one suggestion is to take the Continuum of Care meeting on the road. Mr. Strunk stated this is a unified voice and the staff is always getting the information out. Mr. Bridge agreed and stated the HUD application process is a strength and bringing in technical support has shown improvement with the increase amount of funding. Chair Stanton stated they would need to see what other agencies and coalitions are doing to not duplicate other programs. Mr. Bridge commented he would like to see the Continuum higher on the MAG agenda. Amy St. Peter, MAG, stated the Regional Council Chair, Mayor Cavanaugh, approached her and voiced human services definitely needs more attention and a higher place on the agenda. Chair Stanton inquired if it was possible to invite Regional Council Chair Cavanaugh to a Continuum of Care meeting in the future.

11. Announcements

Chair Stanton brought up the issue of some providers not receiving bus ticket orders. He stated because of a switch in systems they currently are not distributing individual tickets. Ms. Jonovich stated day passes are being issued at this time. Ms. Skotnicki asked what should the agencies that have sent in money and have not yet received tickets do. Ms. Jonovich stated the orders are being filled but the actual bus passes are coming in incrementally. Ms. Skotnicki stated her clients who are on an emergency

needs basis have not received their tickets. Chair Stanton stated they would look into it and try to give her further information.

12. Announcements

There were no announcements.

13. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 3:32 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 24, 2008 from 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. location to be determined.